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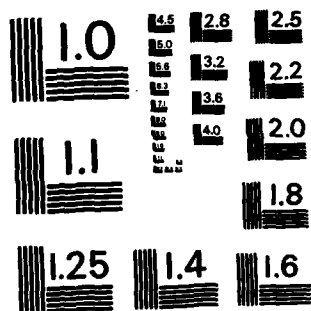
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THE MORAL DIMENSION OF NATIONAL SECURITY

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THE MORAL DIMENSION OF NATIONAL SECURITY

by

**Christopher J. Tragakis
and
John M. Weinstein**

1 April 1983

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FOREWORD

↓ This memorandum considers the moral dimensions of US nuclear deterrence strategy and involvement in the Third World. The authors maintain that the existence of nuclear weapons in the suspicious and potentially unstable superpower relationship precludes any unilateral US move away from its current retaliatory posture. US attempts to develop a limited warfighting ability are viewed as efforts to deter the full range of Soviet nuclear options and, if deterrence should fail, limit the destructiveness of the US response against Soviet counterforce targets in keeping with the moral imperatives of proportionality and discrimination. In their analysis of US involvement in the Third World, the authors consider whether our involvement is naive and violates the national sovereignty of the host state. They conclude that US support for human rights, especially when couched in terms consistent with international norms of behavior expressed in the UN Charter and the Helsinki Final Act, is not an invasion of national sovereignty. Responding to those who maintain that US concern for human rights is naive, the authors cite Clausewitz's contention that it is naive to think that questions of morality can be divorced from the analysis of national security. However, the United States should recognize that the immediate adoption of Western behavioral patterns cannot occur in societies in which violence has been institutionalized. ↗

The Strategic Issues Research Memoranda program of the Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, provides a means for timely dissemination of analytical papers which are not constrained by format or conformity with institutional policy. These memoranda are prepared on subjects of current importance in strategic areas related to the authors' professional work.

This memorandum was prepared as a contribution to the field of national security research and study. As such, it does not reflect the official view of the College, the Department of the Army, or the Department of Defense.



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SUMMARY

Policymakers often face the dilemma of having to choose from among numerous positive but mutually exclusive alternatives. Nowhere is this dilemma more pronounced than in the formulation of US nuclear deterrence strategy. On one hand, the defense of US values and national integrity requires the existence of nuclear weapons and the maintenance of a balance with the Soviet Union, a state armed with such weapons and with national interests antithetical to our own. In the current world order, the requirements of deterrence mandate the preparation for potentially unprecedented and indiscriminate destruction which may exceed the bounds of proportionality. Consequently, some argue that the current US nuclear doctrine is immoral because it is not consistent with the *jus ad bellum* principles. Charges of immorality which cite the just war requirements of discrimination and proportionality misinterpret the mandate when they demand certainty of predicted warfighting results. Compliance with just war prescriptions demands that a combatant *intend* to limit destruction within the bounds of discrimination and proportionality; not that he predict the outcome of the conflict. In this light, US efforts to develop an accurate, flexible, and secure arsenal that deters the full spectrum of Soviet nuclear options and, if deterrence fails, allows the United States to conduct war in a limited and precise way may be interpreted as more moral than the relatively indiscriminate MAD response.

US involvement in the Third World in support of human rights is criticized by some as naive, culturally imperialistic and immoral when it perpetuates the tenure of a regime associated with human rights abuses. Yet human dignity is at the bedrock of US values and is not dismissed easily from US foreign policy considerations. Clausewitz chided those who would reduce war and national security questions to a simple quantitative calculus. He argued that aspects of morality cannot be divorced from the larger issues.

US emphasis upon human rights has been associated with the evolution of several states toward genuine democracy. Such emphasis should not be construed as cultural imperialism or the denial of sovereignty because the respect for life, human dignity and certain fundamental political rights are not exclusively Western values. They are cited in the UN Charter and may be found in the

philosophical and religious tenets of most Third World cultures. In short, US support for internationally recognized norms of behavior cannot be construed as being inconsistent with the principle of national sovereignty.

Finally, US support of regimes, such as the current government in El Salvador, should be assessed more in the light of their genuine efforts to achieve human rights progress than in their immediate results. The degree of endemic violence in many Third World societies precludes rapid human rights progress and impedes duplication of US-style political behavior. Patience and realistic expectations must accompany continued US emphasis upon human rights progress as a *quid pro quo* for US military and economic assistance.

THE MORAL DIMENSION OF NATIONAL SECURITY

Morality without security is ineffectual; security without morality is empty. To establish the relationship and proportion between these two goals is perhaps the most profound challenge before our government and our nation.'

H. A. Kissinger, 1977

US national security policy recently has been the focus of considerable morally-founded opposition. Two policies in particular, US nuclear deterrent strategy and US policy regarding El Salvador, have been at the forefront of this debate.

As senior military officers, we are expected to advise civilian policymakers on the military aspects of national security policy and we are often required to discuss these issues in public. In order to accomplish these roles competently and with a minimum of personal strain, each officer should be able to articulate national policy in terms consistent with his personally-held moral values. Since the development of a monolithic moral code for all Army members contradicts the American ideal of individual liberty, we should, instead, attempt to develop a moral and institutional

framework for thinking through these vexing issues in a way that thoughtful and even skeptical readers may reconcile national policy and strategy with their personal moral values. There are no facile or definitive answers to the issues. Ultimately, each individual must decide for himself. This endeavor is important to satisfy ourselves and others that these crucial and highly controversial issues are being confronted carefully. The following discussions are intended to contribute to such a framework.

VALUES AND DILEMMAS

Are there values worth protecting? While any attempt to devise such a list would be problematic, it is clear that for most Americans such values exist and that among these peace, justice, freedom, and the dignity of life are paramount. Peace, however, does not imply merely the absence of war, nor life merely stark existence in some *gulag*. The United States is a country that fiercely values the individual and human spirit. Therefore, in the estimation of most Americans, peace must include liberty and security. The conditions of this peace should recognize and honor the dignity of life, the value of each human, and the spiritual dimension of our being. Aggression that violates such a peace is morally as well as physically coercive and justifies forceful resistance. Michael Walzer, in his significant book on the moral issues of war, noted that "aggression is a singular and undifferentiated crime because, in all its forms, it challenges rights that are worth dying for."²

Along with these principles, other dimensions, including legalities and national interests, play a role in the formulation of national policy. Each is important, and at times one may be more important than another, but hardly ever would national policy be determined by any single set of these factors to the exclusion of the others. Policy issues are not just matters involving the balancing of moral dictates, legal restrictions, or political imperatives. Rather, just policy requires the development of a fragile amalgam of the three. International security policy is made even more complex by the need to consider the panoply of idiosyncratic cultural and transnational interests and values which play important roles in the decision process.

Policymakers may be faced occasionally with the ethical dilemma of having to choose from among numerous positive but

mutually exclusive alternatives such as supporting human rights and protecting US geostrategic interests. The policymaker, confronted by a bellicose world possessing the unprecedented means of self-destruction, may find himself in a circumstance in which, as the philosopher Thomas Nagel has said, "there is no honorable or moral course for man to take, no course free of guilt or responsibility for evil."³ In such circumstances, we must encourage the selection of the moral norm that supports the greater common good. The intractability of the moral dimension of national security is epitomized by the following premises:

- The expectation of a world without aggression represents the triumph of hope over experience.

- Some outcomes such as massive nuclear exchange must be avoided; and paradoxically, its contradiction:

- Some costs, including the surrender of freedom and the abandonment of human rights are always too high.

The role of the state has been described as seeking that fragile compromise between conscience and power that most justly reconciles all the contending goals and interests.⁴ Hence, there will inevitably be an ethical tension between the ideal and the practical.

Only in this context is it possible to examine issues as complex and important as US nuclear strategy, US policy toward El Salvador, or the myriad other issues on the national policy spectrum.

NUCLEAR DETERRENCE STRATEGY

Thoughtful debate over US nuclear arms policy has been intense for more than 35 years. For most of this period, the debate has centered on the rationality of various deterrence strategies, their credibility, their efficacy, and their expense. Recently, as typified by the opposition of some Catholic bishops to the threatened use of nuclear weapons, much of the debate has focused upon an additional dimension: the moral aspects of the strategies themselves.

In almost any discussion on the morality of using nuclear weapons, two principles of just means are questioned—discrimination and proportionality. That is, are noncombatants sufficiently secure from direct attack; and is the degree of force used in due proportion to its purpose? Based on these principles,

some have concluded that the effects of nuclear weapons are so devastating and so uncontrollable that:

- Even nuclear employment confined to military targets would cause such massive unintended damage to noncombatants as to violate the just war criterion of discrimination.

- Any first use, however prudent, exacts so great a price from the aggressor as to exceed all bounds of just proportion.

These two arguments of means are often used to support the further conclusions that since there appear to be no just means to initiate a nuclear war, there can be no cause which justifies engaging in such a war; and if it is wrong to use such weapons, then it is equally wrong to threaten their use to deter war.¹

Barring capitulation, this formulation of the nuclear debate is in terms that cannot be translated into a policy that could diminish the threat of conventional aggression or nuclear war because there are crucial conditions and flaws in the current structure of world order: nuclear weapons exist and cannot be disinvented; possession of nuclear weapons has proliferated and may continue to expand; rivalry and insecurity are permanent facts of diplomacy; the Soviet Union's security interests and values are often at dangerous variance to our own. In this context, the fundamental ethical dilemma is how the United States can prevent one evil (the global expansion of Soviet control at the expense of Western interests) by threatening to unleash another evil (nuclear destruction and radioactive contamination). More specifically, why does the United States continue to improve its nuclear capability if we conclude that its strategic or theater use would be so enormously destructive of human lives and values as to surpass all limits of proportionality and discrimination?

Those who pose this question often fail to distinguish between means and ends. The possession of nuclear weapons is not intended to promote war. Their possession and acquisition are means to deter rather than fight a nuclear war by achieving strategic balance between contending nuclear states. If there is one clear conclusion of almost all debate on nuclear strategy, it is that strategic balance stabilizes and strengthens nuclear deterrence, thereby minimizing the likelihood of nuclear war. It is also important to realize that strategic balance has little meaning when assessed at the macro level which compares only total numbers of weapons or megatonnage. Balance, instead, must be measured in terms of an

intricate net assessment of the total of capabilities and vulnerabilities of the composite force structures. Thus, improving weapons systems or developing a variety of yields and capabilities, by providing added force options or robustness, is likely to contribute to improved strategic balance. This added stability derives from the added credibility that flexible options might provide. Moreover, as observed recently by Professor William O'Brien of Georgetown, such flexible and limited options serve the moral dimension. O'Brien argues that the ability to conduct a wide range of military options, should deterrence fail, is the only means by which the United States could avoid unleashing a total and indiscriminate retaliatory strike on the Soviet Union. Accordingly, the United States is morally correct in attempting:

to develop a possibly feasible, possibly proportionate and discriminate . . . strategy that could actually be carried out if deterrence failed. Such a flexible response counterforce posture could strengthen deterrence precisely because it could be employed morally whereas the MAD countervalue strategy could not.⁶

He concludes this argument with the thought that it is neither moral nor effective to threaten to do what one would not or should not do.

Consistent with the rationale for flexibility expressed above, much of the nuclear research and force structure decisions of the United States have had proportionality and discrimination as their goals. Hence, improvements in targeting precision, efforts to secure the National Command Authority and C³I facilities, and the search for a less vulnerable basing mode for the MX are intended in part to contribute to the limitation of collateral damage to Soviet noncombatants. Some critics of current US strategic doctrine assert that it is naive to believe that nuclear war can remain limited. Certainly, neither the United States nor the Soviet Union can guarantee that the conduct of nuclear war could remain limited. However, the inability to guarantee the *outcome* of a nuclear war is not the issue upon which the assessment of current strategies should depend. On this point, O'Brien notes:

. . . this is the first time that I have encountered the requirement that a belligerent must guarantee the outcome of the use of the military instrument. This goes beyond moral certainty and far beyond the requirements of just war. The *jus ad bellum* requirement of proportionality requires that the

probable good to be gained in a war exceed the foreseeable evil. An honest estimate is required, not a guarantee. The principle of proportion in the *jus in bello* requires that the effects of the military action be reasonably proportionate to the importance of the military objective. The requirement is one of a calculation made in good faith in a chaotic environment, not guaranteed results. When the principle of discrimination is applied, the standard of noncombatant protection is a reasonable effort to avoid collateral damage, not a guarantee that such damage will not be excessive.⁷

In this framework, there is no inconsistency in improving nuclear forces. Attempting to achieve the requirements of stable nuclear deterrence while negotiating with the Soviet Union to achieve a mutual, substantial reduction of forces is a rational and morally consistent position. Unilateral reductions and unbalanced nuclear freezes may be well-intended, but are dangerous leaps over observable historical, political, and military realities in general, and superpower relations in particular.

During periods of perceived force imbalance between contending nuclear states, even the smallest crisis risks dangerous escalation. The most stabilizing deterrent should, therefore, discourage the entire spectrum of mischief, not just naked military aggression. In that context, the primary goal of US nuclear policy for 30 years has been the prevention of *all* war between nuclear states, not just the prevention of nuclear use. Nuclear force balance continues to be an imperative of that policy because no clear path has been found that removes dependence on nuclear forces, both US and Soviet, from the deterrent purposes they serve. This does not mean, of course, that the United States or the Soviet Union should eschew nonmilitary methods of guaranteeing peace. Economic interaction, diplomacy, and cultural exchanges, to mention only a few options, are important and necessary initiatives in this regard. Arguments that an administration would be foolish to rely only upon nuclear weapons to assure its defense and pursue its interests also are valid in the converse: national security cannot be pursued without these weapons which are an undeniable component in the complex mosaic of superpower relations.

In the framework of this rationale, most strategic theoreticians who have grappled with this issue agree that the following events are destabilizing: one-sided disarmament; one-sided escalation; and targeting plans, or weapons capabilities that allow for or proscribe certain behaviors unilaterally. They also agree that an inescapable paradox of the current strategy of war deterrence is that the will to

conduct nuclear war must be demonstrated in order to prevent the war. Nuclear deterrence works because each side, given its will for self-preservation, exhibits an understandable dread of unleashing such awesome destructive power in the fear of self-destruction.

The actual possibility and abhorrence of total or even limited nuclear war rightly informs all aspects of the nuclear debate. Consequently, the characterization of war as a continuation of politics by other means may no longer be appropriate between contending nuclear states. This powerful deterrent, despite its great risk, has been both effective and durable. Europe has gone 37 years without a war. If a just peace is one of the highest moral values, then our deterrent strategy should be judged by the degree to which it ultimately contributes to that moral value of peace.

The current strategy is unquestionably costly and not without danger. Its reliance on flexible options, threats, and counterthreats of nuclear retaliation are tolerable only because we appear as yet to lack the imagination and trust to conceive of less dangerous, but equally effective, alternatives. In our opinion, one objective of US national policy should be to move beyond contemporary nuclear deterrence, to a new stage of strategic balance and eventually to nuclear disarmament. It is not the purpose of this paper to address current force capabilities, or to consider the merits of any possible paths to this elusive goal or to define the next stage. Our discussion suggests, however, that in order to contribute to stability, any policy must strive for mutual balance. Balancing nuclear forces alone, however, is insufficient because of the enormously destructive capacity of present force levels and the risk and costs of failure. Reduction of force levels in such a way that neither superpower gains a military advantage continues to be in the interest of both the United States and the Soviet Union.

US nuclear policy should continue to be shaped by a deep commitment to justice and a stable, lasting peace secure from aggression and oppression. The tools of power have no inherent morality. Moral principle is only reflected by the intentions of man and his society using these tools of power in pursuit of national interests. In US foreign policy, both nuclear and conventional arms have as their primary mission the preservation of just peace; the only environment in which genuine moral and ethical values can survive and flourish.

STRATEGY IN EL SALVADOR AND THE THIRD WORLD

Intervention and "Justness." Over the past several centuries, the *jus ad bellum* doctrine, which asserts the moral duty to intervene to help others resist aggression, has been augmented by the law of war which defines and reflects the legal expectations of states. The legal and moral dimensions of just intervention that have evolved are largely intertwined. St. Augustine asserted a moral duty to intervene to help others resist unjust aggression. Hugo Grotius, the 17th century Dutch statesman and jurist whose works formed the basis of international law, concluded, "If the one who needs assistance has a just cause, those who render such assistance also have justice on their side."¹ And Ramsey, a contemporary theologian, asserted that anyone who fails to help a neighbor who is under attack is as morally guilty as the aggressor. Article 51 of the UN Charter represents the contemporary international legal criterion for determining whether a state's cause is justifiable. The Charter reduces *jus ad bellum* to individual and collective self-defense. All other criteria are excluded. These legal and moral principles may be precarious and often violated, but they represent the cumulative experience and aspirations of states in the 20th century.

Support for the government of El Salvador by the US Government has aroused moral indignation in various quarters because, in the context of the above, critics contend that the:

- United States violates El Salvadoran sovereignty when it tries to impose our moral standards;
- US support of an "immoral" authoritarian regime is immoral;
- US support of many Third World states is naive;
- US support to El Salvador is "interventionist" because what is occurring there is not unjust aggression but civil strife.

Let us examine some moral aspects of these issues.

Sovereignty. Is the United States violating the principle of sovereignty when it attempts to influence another country by trying to identify moral behavior or encourage acceptance of our own values? When a norm has international recognition, a country cannot claim that support for it violates its sovereignty. The Helsinki Accords are admissions by even the Soviets of this principle. For instance, although the concept of human rights is a

Western value, violations of the concept also offend the religious and philosophical heritages of all people. Buddhism emphasizes the obligatory nature of charity, hospitality, and love for every living being. Chinese tradition expects the government to be human-hearted and elevates filial piety to a high moral virtue. Finally, Islam urges men to be compassionate. Hence, US advocacy for compassion and respect for life is not a reflection of a purely American or Western value and, thus, not a violation of national sovereignty. However, a universal moral framework that would allow the United States to be viewed unambiguously as "moral" does not exist. Therefore, the United States should not attempt to express its domestic moral values or those of others in universally moral terms. The presumptions that we can identify them and that our actions coincide with them are highly ethnocentric. We should justify our foreign policy behavior in terms of our domestic values—the freedoms of speech, press, religion, and assembly; the franchise; and the right to a fair and speedy trial. Deviation from these precepts makes us liable for international criticism. If our behavior supports values subscribed to in the Third World (e.g., antiracism), our actions would be viewed as going beyond narrow self-interest. As such, we create an international environment that may limit the attractiveness of the Soviet Union's agenda and also the freedom of action the Soviets can pursue. For instance, the Soviet violation of the nonintervention principle in Afghanistan created an international storm of protest which may limit future Soviet actions. The United States should not attempt to compete with the Soviet Union on its ideological home turf (i.e., duplicity), and we would be unwise to try to do so. We must strive to create an international environment which forces the Soviets to play according to our rules (i.e., self-determination, human rights, etc.). Hence, it is in our best interests to emphasize the importance and impact of moral considerations in foreign policy.

Morality and Realpolitik. Will too much concern for a "moral" foreign policy render the United States incapable of dealing successfully with the Soviet Union whose foreign policy behavior recognizes the opportunism inherent in REALPOLITIK? It is difficult to measure and quantify morality, but, as Clausewitz contends,⁹ the concept is always present. There is no clear distinction between policy and values. The morally ambiguous nature of the Vietnamese conflict aroused great national and

international outcries which limited US options and affected the outcome of the war, America's military superiority notwithstanding. The citizens of the United States will not support for long, actions they consider immoral. If asked what this country is all about, Americans will not answer "capitalism" or express US interests in negative goals such as containment. Rather, we stand for human dignity and self-determination. We cannot pay lip service to these concepts and not practice them except at the risk of hypocrisy. National policy and the moral foundation upon which they rest cannot be divorced.

Naivete of US Policy. Is it naive for the United States to expect positive change from authoritarian regimes? Some critics of US policy in the Third World fail to consider the potential of these states to realize progress in human rights and other democratic values. While these governments may not change rapidly, most at least admit to the need for humane values, rights, etc. We could expect, therefore, to impel slow, but real change toward a more moral state. Positive change is possible and probable if carefully nurtured. In fact, the record shows that the West has been relatively successful in the promotion of human rights and other moral concepts. The authoritarian regime of the late Korean President Park Chung Hee released political dissidents from prison as a result of US intercession. Soviet dissident Andrei Sakharov has indicated the positive effect of US pressure upon the Soviet Union. Other authoritarian regimes (Spain, Portugal, and Greece) have evolved into democracies.

The Need for Patience. While US efforts are well-intentioned in regard to attempts to catalyze positive change, perceptions by some observers are less supportive. Too often, the United States is seen as desirous only of retaining the *status quo* rather than seeking progressive change. A political system is affected by variables from within, such as laws and interest groups; and parameters, external to the system, such as international economics, alliance commitments, etc. The political system achieves equilibrium when a balance is struck between these internal and external factors. This equilibrium is not static, however, since political conditions change, both within and without (for example, domestic pressure for greater enfranchisement, or power shifts among neighboring states). If a political regime denies popular demands for the freedoms of speech, press, religion, assembly, etc., it resists the

tendency toward a new equilibrium. Such attempts by those in power increase the likelihood of social unrest and may even foment revolution as we saw in Iran. US support of such resistance to political demands cannot be successful in the long run. Furthermore, such a US position contradicts our own heritage and aligns the United States with the forces of reaction, those whose historical success has been, at best, transitory. But the dilemma is that the United States should not push too hard or too fast for expanded rights or other social reforms. This is especially true at times when a new or weak government is trying to establish an economic infrastructure upon which to base national development or counter the domestic turbulence of subversive activity. In this case, the more realistic moral question becomes how can the United States help people in a polarized or chaotic political system? US human rights efforts, bereft of well-integrated economic support, technologic and military assistance, and much understanding may be perceived by that government not as help, but as an additional threat to its existence. A strong human rights offensive from outside, too soon in a state's democratization process, may raise public expectations for yet unattainable possibilities resulting in more rather than less political and social turbulence. Political realism calls for patience and caution in nurturing positive change. The goal in this regard must be toward an open political system capable of reflecting all these internal and external pressures. A closed system, by insulating itself from sensitivity to these pressures, usually gravitates toward injustice, repression, and, ultimately, instability.

Pluralistic Values. In order for change to be institutionalized by a government and accepted by its people, it must be founded on the values of the national culture. This requires time, patience, and a recognition on the part of both Americans and Third World politicians striving to establish a genuine and legitimate base of support, that the automatic replication of US institutions is unrealistic and unwise. While we want to encourage the development of democracies, we must acknowledge the existence of a pluralistic world, comprised of states whose political and social systems reflect indigenous characteristics, experiences, and capabilities. Such a view should be attendant by a reduced US expectation of the results that our efforts will have on desirable social change in other states.

Interventionism or Collective Self-Defense? One of the most debated moral and legal issues concerns the judgment as to whether US action in El Salvador is morally justified assistance against aggression or unjust intervention. Intervention is generally agreed to occur when a state forcibly and without invitation intervenes in the affairs of another, thereby denying to the latter its right of self-determination. If US involvement is solicited by the host state to respond to intervention by another state, then the US action is contextually moral. If, however, US involvement is uninvited and not in response to another state's intervention, then US action may violate moral and legal conventions. The sequence of involvement by outside states is therefore crucial to the "justness" of that involvement. In the case of El Salvador, it would contribute greatly to the moral justification of US policy to establish, unequivocally, that other states have intervened by supporting political violence through proxies or the introduction of arms, training, or cadres into El Salvador.

There continues to be considerable conflicting "advocacy journalism" from all sides of the debate on this issue, and it has been difficult to ascertain and evaluate the facts. This state of affairs is likely to continue, and it is also likely that "original entry" may never be proven to the satisfaction of all parties. In order for the Administration to make headway in this regard, and in the matter of assessing human rights progress made abroad, it is essential that its spokesmen at all levels reflect, and be perceived as reflecting, a genuine intellectual honesty and commitment to human rights.

El Salvador Today. Against this backdrop, let us consider how US involvement in El Salvador measures up. Our continued support for the elected government of El Salvador, measured in moral terms, should depend on the human rights progress achieved there in recent years and on the determination that our involvement is, indeed, in support of collective self-defense. The latest (July 27, 1982) semiannual report to Congress to certify progress in El Salvador on human rights (required by public law to justify the continuation of military aid) met with much predictable criticism, but also with more praise than the previous report. The certification generally concludes that El Salvador has made substantial progress since 1979. In 1982, El Salvador abandoned its heritage of military rule for a government created by a genuine

popular election. More than 1.4 million adult Salvadorans (80 percent) participated in the election in spite of terrorist attacks on voters and voting places. The certification further concludes that: (1) El Salvador slowly is overcoming the worst abuses of political violence; (2) guerrilla activity appears somewhat reduced; and, (3) progress in overcoming armed violence continues. While allegations that kidnapping and torture continue, disregard for civil and political rights by the Salvadoran Army is judged to be diminishing. Other necessary initiatives, such as land reform, are making "marred but real" progress. Instruction on human rights and law of war training (provided members of the El Salvadoran armed forces in their training at Forts Benning and Bragg) are being undertaken and have had, according to the Administration, positive effects.

These conclusions of the certification, however, have not been accepted uncritically. Administration views would be strengthened immeasurably if they were reinforced by some independent agency such as the United Nations or Amnesty International. Recently, the Reagan Administration seems to have retreated somewhat from the assurances of its July certification. In late autumn, Under Secretary of Defense Fred Ikle traveled to El Salvador to warn Defense Minister Garcia that continued US military aid may be jeopardized by recent human rights abuses. Ambassador Deane Hinton alleged that the threat from the rightist mafia was equal to that of the leftist guerrillas and that as many as 30,000 Salvadorans may have died as a result of political violence in the last 3 years. The case regarding progress on human rights and on the sequence of involvement by outside states remains, therefore, arguable. However, expectation of rapid progress by those agencies may be unrealistic. One must recognize the very different value base of the El Salvadoran culture and the magnitude and rate of change we expect of that country. El Salvador is a quasifeudal state with an endemic level of violence that surpasses all US experience and comprehension. The national government has yet to consolidate full control over all the agencies of regional government, especially the national police and treasury police, and it is primarily these agencies rather than the Army, that are the sources of "government" human rights violations.

The El Salvadoran government realizes that its continued legitimacy depends upon popular support, and moreover, that

without social change, it cannot hope to maintain this support. It must now be made to recognize that US military support may yet be jeopardized by the continued failure of the judicial system to respond effectively to all violations of national law. The persistent inability of the judiciary to cope with these matters can only frustrate rather than reinforce the positive intentions of the El Salvadoran administration.

In the context of these moral factors, US policy objectives in the Caribbean in general, and El Salvador in particular, should remain the creation of a peaceful, just, and economically productive region. As long as the government of El Salvador aspires to genuine and positive partnership in that endeavor, US support for El Salvador would be consistent with international moral norms.

ENDNOTES

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3. Thomas Nagel, "War and Massacre," *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, Vol. 1, Winter 1972, p. 143.
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Soviet counterforce targets in keeping with the moral imperatives of proportionality and discrimination. In their analysis of US involvement in the Third World, the authors consider whether our involvement is naive and violates the national sovereignty of the host state. They conclude that US support for human rights, especially when couched in terms consistent with international norms of behavior expressed in the UN Charter and the Helsinki Final Act, is not an invasion of national sovereignty. Responding to those who maintain that US concern for human rights is naive, the authors cite Clausewitz's contention that it is naive to think that questions of morality can be divorced from the analysis of national security. However, the United States should recognize that the immediate adoption of Western behavioral patterns cannot occur in societies in which violence has been institutionalized.

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